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Drawing Amendments

There are no amendments to the drawings.

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Remarks

The Office Action of 12/29/2009 rejected claims 6, 8-10, 21, and 23-25, as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) over U.S. Patent No. 7,099,448, S. Laniepce, et al. (hereafter referred to as Laniepce) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0091517 of J. Frank, et al. (hereafter referred to as Frank) further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,457,043 of W.I. Kwak, et al. (hereafter referred to as Kwak). No claims are being amended or canceled. Claims 6, 8-10, 13-14, 21, and 23-25 are presently pending in the application.

Rejection of claims 6, 8-10, 21, and 23-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a)

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art cited must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The Applicants respectfully assert that the third criteria also has not been meant since the combination

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of Laniepce, Frank, and Kwak fails to teach or suggest each limitation of the Applicants' claimed invention.

Claim 6 recites:

A method for performing participant identification in a conference of a plurality of participants, comprising the steps of:
performing a simple speech algorithm to detect a change in an active participant among a set of the plurality of participants using an endpoint telecommunication unit by the endpoint telecommunication unit whereby the speech algorithm only determines the change in the active participant and not the identity of the active participant;

signaling the detected change to a system controller that is providing overall control of a telecommunication switching system which comprises the endpoint telecommunication unit and a conference unit by the endpoint telecommunication unit by transmission of a message whereby the conference unit is combining audio information from the plurality of participants;

transmitting another message by the system controller to the conference unit by the system controller to inform the conference unit of the detected change; and

determining in response to the other message the identity of a new active participant of the set of the plurality of participants by the conference unit performing voice recognition to identify the new active participant in response to the signaled change whereby the conference unit processes speech information from only the endpoint telecommunication unit.

Claim 6 recites that an endpoint telecommunication unit which is providing access to a conference for a set of participants to the conference only performs a simple speech algorithm to detect when a new active participant of the set of participants using the endpoint telecommunication unit starts to speak. Claim 6 very clearly recites "the speech algorithm only determines the change in the active participant and not the identity of the active participant". The endpoint telecommunication unit then signals the system controller of the telecommunication system that a new active participant has

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started to speak on the endpoint telecommunication unit by transmission of a message. In response to the message from the endpoint telecommunication unit, the system controller signals the conference unit which performs voice recognition to identify the new active participant. These operations have the advantage that the endpoint telecommunication unit does not have to perform voice recognition which in the case of an IP telephone could exceed the processing capabilities of the IP telephone. In addition, since the conference unit only has to perform voice recognition to identify a new active participant when a message is received from the system controller, this greatly reduces the processing requirements of the conference unit. Without such a message, the conference unit would constantly have to perform voice recognition on all voice information being received from endpoints of the conference to determine if a new participant was speaking. In a large conference, this requirement would place an enormous processing load on the conference unit.

On Page 3, first paragraph, of Laniepce, the Office Action states that terminal T_1 can perform the functions of both the endpoint terminal and the conference unit. Laniepce does disclose in Column 2, lines 59-62, that the functions of conference unit PCT of Figure 1 can be placed in a terminal such as T_1. However, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Laniepce that the functions of conference unit PCT be subdivided among 2 terminals nor does the Office Action state

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this. Laniepce discloses that if the functions of the PCT are being performed by T_1 that all of the functions of the PCT are performed by T_1.

The performing step of claim 6 clearly recites:

performing a simple speech algorithm to detect a change in an active participant among a set of the plurality of participants using an endpoint telecommunication unit by the endpoint telecommunication unit whereby the speech algorithm only determines the change in the active participant and not the identity of the active participant;

There is no disclosure or suggestion in Laniepce that T_1 would use a different processing algorithm to detect the change in the active participant of the participants directly using T_1 versus the processing used for other participants of the conference call which is what is recited in claim 6. The Office Action cites the text in Column 9, line 27-Column 10, line 6. The cited text does not disclose or suggest that a conference bridge being implemented by T_1 would process information differently from the participants directly using T_1 versus the information from other participants using another terminal. Further, the cited text discloses that analyzer AV performs this analysis, and this analyzer is clearly disclosed in the remainder of Column 10 as performing the full voice recognition. In addition, the cited text clearly discloses the use of the full capability of analyzer AV. There is no disclosure of using voice processing to simply detect a change in an active participant but rather the full identification of that participant. The cited text in Column 11, lines 37-60, does not disclose such a simple speech algorithm operation but rather disclose the

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interconnection of mobile radio telephones and their connection to a conference bridge.

In addition with respect to the step of performing, The Office Action states "whereby the speech algorithm determines the change in the active participant (Column 7, lines 22-54)". First, claim 6 recites "whereby the speech algorithm only determines the change in the active participant and not the identity of the active participant" which is more limiting than the Examiner's statement. Further, The cited text In Column 7, lines 22-54, discloses the operations that take place to pre-identify the participants before the conference starts and not what the Examiner states.

With respect to the step of determining, claim 6 recites:

determining in response to the other message the identity of a new active participant of the set of the plurality of participants by the conference unit performing voice recognition to identify the new active participant in response to the signaled change whereby the conference unit processes speech information from only the endpoint telecommunication unit.

The Office Action states "determining the identity of a new active participant of the set of the plurality of participants by the conference unit performing voice recognition to identify the new active participant in response to the change whereby the conference unit processes information from only the endpoint terminal (T_1 as conference unit, column 6, lines 44-column 7, line 8;, lines 27-15)". First, claim 6 clearly states that the conference unit is responsive to an external signal, as

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defined in the steps of signaling and transmitting, to determine the identity of the active participant. The functions of the conference unit (which are described with respect to the conference bridge PCT but which can be performed in T_1) of detecting and determining an active participant are performed in terminal. There is no suggestion or disclosure of receiving an external signal to the conference unit. Nor is it clear how such an external signal would be utilized by the conference unit. The text cited by the Office Action is very clear that all operations are performed internal to the conference unit. There is no reason why the conference unit would transmit a signal to a system controller in order to receive another message from the system controller informing the conference unit that it should determine the active participant. There is no suggestion in Laniepcce of such an operation or even a need for such an operation.

The Office Action only relies on Frank to disclose that the speaker recognition of Laniepcce could utilize a simple speech algorithm to detect a change in the speaker. It should be noted that Frank does not disclose or suggest that the speaker change detection operation be performed in a telecommunication terminal. Further, this function of detecting an active line is already performed by the conference unit of Laniepcce.

The Office Action states "moreover, Kwak discloses a method for the purpose of assisting a conference unit in

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performing participant identification in a conference of the plurality of participants wherein a detected change in a conference participant is sent to the system controller which it transmits a message to conference unit that identifies the new active participant in response to the signaled change (Abstract; lines 7-14; column 6 lines 66-column 7 line 8, 11-21, 12-32; 41-48; column 8 lines 9-18)". Clearly, the Office Action is only relying on Kwak as disclosing how a system controller can signal a conference unit to determine the identity of a new active participant. There is no disclosure or suggestion in the cited text from Kwak that system controller (MC 90) is responsive to a signaled change from a terminal via a transmission of a message to request that the conference unit (MP 92, speaker ID service processor 52, and data memory 80) identify the new active participant. Rather, Kwak clearly teaches that the activation of a "request to speak switch" 36 fully identifies the new active speaker to conference manager 22 of Figure 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that the third of the criteria has not been met.

Consider whether the second of the criteria is meant requiring that there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Since Laniece discloses performing continuous participant identification on incoming audio information to identify a change in the active participant; and Frank and Kwak do not signal merely change in the active participant to a

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system controller which in turn transmits a message to a conference circuit, these three references cannot be combined to produce a system that performs the steps recited in claim 6 in the manner stated in the Office Action.

Consider whether the first of the criteria is meant requiring that there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Because of the basic incompatibility of Laniepce, Frank, and Kwak, one skilled in the art would not find a suggestion or motivation to combine these three references together.

In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully submit that claim 6 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) over Laniepce, Frank, and Kwak.

Dependent claims 8-10 are directly or indirectly dependent on independent claim 6 and are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 6.

Further, applicants also respectfully submit that claim 21 and claims 23-25 are also patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) for the same reasons as claims 6 and 8-10.

Rejection of claims 11, 13, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) over Laniepce in view of Frank, and further in view of Kwak

In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully submit that claim 11 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) over

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Laniepce in view of Frank and further in view of Kwak for the same reasons as set forth with respect to claim 6.


Further, applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 13 and 14 which are indirectly or directly dependent on claim 11 are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Summary

In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the remaining claims in the application, and allowance of these claims.

Although the foregoing is believed to be dispositive of the issues in the application, if the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution, the Examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully,
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